



United States
Department of
Agriculture

**Conservation Initiatives ...
A Cooperative Effort**

504 FW 6
Appendix 2
Page 1 of 3

APR 29 1968

SUBJECT: Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Filter Strip Initiatives

**TO : State and County ASCS Executive Directors
State, Area, and District SCS Conservationists
State Extension Directors
Extension Administrators, 1890 Institutions
and Tuskegee University
Regional Forester, Area FS Directors, and State Foresters
State Natural Resources/Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Directors
Fish and Wildlife Service Field Offices
Environmental Protection Agency Regional Administrator**

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), by stabilizing eroding cropland, has become a major tool to combat nonpoint source pollution of our streams and other waterbodies. To further the goal of preventing the degradation of water quality, the CRP was modified prior to the sixth signup to allow the inclusion of 66 to 99 foot wide strip of cropland, irrespective of the erosion rate, along streams and waterbodies for the establishment of grass, shrub, or tree vegetated filter strips. Agency personnel should aggressively urge landowners to take advantage of this opportunity.

The new "VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIPS" practice, if established and maintained on a large scale, should improve water quality while keeping fertile soil on the land. Filter strips can act as filters of sediment, associated nutrients, and other pollutants. The result is a reduction in the loading of pollutants to the water. If enough farmers in a watershed establish filter strips, water quality can be improved. Filter strips reduce erosion in cropland areas by providing a safe place for water to leave the field, thus preventing the formation of gullies. These strips will also improve wildlife habitat by providing riparian travelways and nesting, escape and feeding cover along the water where it is most needed. Streamside forests established by tree and shrub plantings provide a diverse habitat for many species of wildlife and have some other attractive advantages, including permanency and excellent soil holding capability.

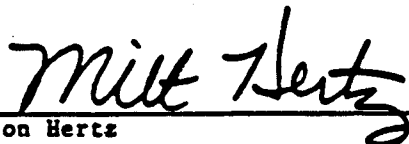
-2-

We strongly encourage State and local Department of Agriculture (USDA) employees and others involved in CRP to work together with Federal and State natural resource agency personnel to realize the full benefits of filter strips along our Nation's streams and waterbodies. A cooperative effort in each State should be initiated to promote the inclusion of cropland filter strips in the CRP and to plan for the development of filter strips of maximum value for preventing stream and other waterbody siltation and for wildlife. USDA State office personnel, specifically, are requested to hold meetings to develop activities and directives that bring about a filter strip establishment campaign in their States. Such meetings and program development should be conducted in cooperation with personnel from Fish and Wildlife Service field offices, Environmental Protection Agency regional offices, and State natural resource agency offices. A variety of other active steps that may include some or all of the following should also be taken:

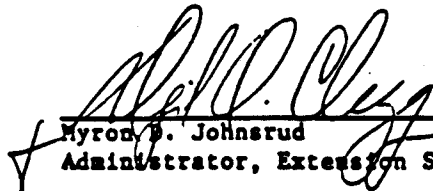
- A. The inclusion of members of private conservation organizations to aid in publicizing the effort and to assist in recruiting and encouraging farmer participation in the program.
- B. The encouragement of similar joint efforts at the regional and county levels.
- C. Notification of producers with cropland along streams and other waterbodies that they are now eligible for CRP benefits if they choose to establish and maintain filter strips.
- D. The consideration of promotional efforts for specific streams or stream reaches carrying heavy sediment loads and those where a scenic corridor along the stream would have additional recreational value.
- E. The encouragement of other governmental and private agencies and organizations to assist landowners in completing and filling the necessary paperwork and in establishment of filter strips once their cropland has been entered in the CRP.
- F. Awards and commendations for USDA and other agency staff, program participants, and volunteer groups which recognize outstanding efforts to establish filter strips and to obtain participation on the initiative.

-3-

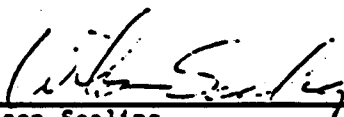
As the CRP is becoming a leading program in the control of erosion and improvement of water quality, we are counting on all our personnel to become actively involved in this filter strip initiative while the opportunity still exists. Let's get the maximum amount of participation possible in the CRP signup.



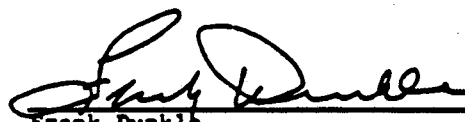
Milton Hertz
Administrator, Agricultural
Stabilization and Conservation
Service



Myron P. Johnsrud
Administrator, Extension Service



Wilson Scaling
Chief, Soil Conservation Service



Frank Dunkle
Director, Fish and Wildlife
Service



Rebecca Hanmer
Acting Assistant Admin. for Water
Environmental Protection Agency



F. Dale Robertson
Chief, Forest Service